

First lady makes big impression during visit to Wiesbaden schools

Stops at Hainerberg and H.H. Arnold

**Commentary by
Alex Steele**

*Gen. H.H. Arnold High School
senior*

First Lady Laura Bush visited Gen. H.H. Arnold High School Feb. 22.

When I first heard that Mrs. Bush was coming to visit my school, I thought, "This might be kind of cool." I wasn't initially psyched about the whole trip; I just thought it would be an interesting opportunity that I didn't want to miss. Was that ever an understatement.

During the weeks before the Feb. 22 visit, many plans were under way. People were becoming tense, and it began to dawn on me how significant this event was going to be. On the Friday before her visit, I heard about a lot of preparations and changes that were being made to the gym. An enormous camouflage backdrop was put up to bolster the image of a school whose students are military dependents.

On Tuesday, the day of Bush's visit, many additional guards were stationed on the school campus. Cars were not allowed to park in the parking lot and the Secret Service was visible making final preparations for that afternoon.

At 1:30 p.m. the students who didn't want to stay for Mrs. Bush's visit left school early to catch the buses home. I stayed with about 400 other students waiting for the arrival of the first lady.

I was invited to sit on the stage with Mrs. Bush because I am very involved with some organizations at school. About 60 other kids were invited too. Because there was not enough room on the main stage, about 20 other kids, including me, were seated on a side stage to her right.

After classes ended at 2:30 p.m. we entered the gym to get seated. We sat in the decked out gym, listening to the same four songs constantly repeating from a CD while the school band practiced. At 3:55 an announcement was made to welcome the first lady.

It was such a cool feeling, having seen Mrs. Bush several times on television, and to see her now, standing only 30 or 40 feet away. She walked in with several Secret

Service agents, our school principal Eric Goldman and assistant principals Shelia Smith and David Theis.

The whole afternoon seemed to go off without a hitch. The national anthem, sung by Deanna Bruce, Lilah Solo-Foote and Danielle Hawley, sounded amazing. The JROTC color guard was faultless, marching in step and looking very professional.

Bush's speech was exciting to hear. It was odd to hear her talk about students and teachers at our school, but at the same time it made the whole event real; she was speaking directly to us and for us. I especially enjoyed her comments about some of us having to take Frau Pow's class, and the fact that Wiesbaden won the Division I football championship. "Congratulations on your win. Principal Goldman told me that the Lions didn't have a chance," said Mrs. Bush. The audience responded with an eruption of whistles and applause.

After the speech the first lady stayed to shake hands and pose for pictures with us. I was surprised, because I was sure that she would leave immediately after she finished. I stood toward the end of the line, but I still got to shake her hand and pose with her and several friends for a picture.

She even talked to me. "Thank you for what you've done," she said. I'm so glad I chose to stay after school to hear her speak, and I am thankful to her for her thoughtful visit.

Diana Ohman (far right), Department of Defense Dependents Schools-Europe director, and Laura Bush listen as General H.H. Arnold High School Student Council president and Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps deputy commander Rafael Chico-Lugo introduces Bush as "one of the most highly respected women of our time" to students and faculty assembled in the school gym Feb. 22. The first lady addressed students for about 15 minutes stressing the importance of the roles students' parents played in Iraq.



Photos by David Ruderman
Laura Bush greets the Hainerberg Elementary School chorus during a visit to the school Feb. 22. Following a performance by the students in the school's library, Bush sat in at a roundtable discussion in which 20 fourth- and fifth-grade students asked the first lady questions such as what it was like to live in the White House, what was her favorite book and what was it like to have so many bodyguards.



221st BSB – Wiesbaden, Wackernheim, Dexheim



Photos courtesy of 1st Armored Division Public Affairs Office

Country-western legends, the Gatlin Brothers, perform for approximately 3,000 Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines in a fest tent at Wiesbaden Army Airfield Feb. 23. As an "old friend of the president," Larry Gatlin said he was pleased when asked to entertain Soldiers before the president's arrival. "We didn't serve in the military so this is our way of serving," Gatlin said during an interview earlier in the day.



Diana DeGarmo, runner up in last year's "American Idol," gets the crowd rocking as she sings her rendition of "Old Time Rock and Roll." DeGarmo ended her performance with a standing crowd singing along to "America the Beautiful."



President George W. Bush waves to the crowd during his visit to Wiesbaden Army Airfield Feb. 23. "Laura and I were in the neighborhood and just thought we'd say hi—Howdy," said Bush to a cheering crowd. Photo left: Before the president's speech Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice addresses the troops. Photo right: the president and first lady greet the crowd at Wiesbaden Army Airfield during their visit.



Identity theft: Safeguarding personal information crucial for Soldiers and civilians

By Karen Edge

221st Base Support Battalion Public Affairs Office

As high school friends they shared everything — intimate thoughts, shopping adventures and a limo to the prom. But one day the line between sharing and stealing was crossed.

"I was a freshman in college. My mom had applied for my first credit card, and since I shared an address with my best friend, that is where it was sent," said the victim of identity theft. "When I finally got my first credit card I was so excited. I remember making my first and last purchase on it."

Somewhere between getting the card and using the card the woman's best friend contacted the credit card agency from which it had been issued and told the company the card had been stolen and she would need a new card. It was easy since the girls knew each other's personal information including birth dates and Social Security numbers.

"The next time I tried to use my card the cashier cut it up in my face. When I called the credit card company I was told I had reported my card stolen and requested a new one," said the victim.

A card never arrived and the next time she heard back from the credit card company they were demanding payment.

"They wanted \$967.68," she said. "I explained to the agency I didn't have a credit card and that I had never gotten the second card they were supposed to be sending me. It took more than five years to get the debt removed from my name and from my credit report. During those years I could not get any new credit and had a very hard time getting an internship

at a financial institute while finishing my degree."

After having her identity stolen by her best friend, the woman said even years later she is extremely cautious when making friends.

Capt. Steve Meredith, 221st BSB Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment commander, was faced with the complex detangling of his own credit after having his identity stolen by a stranger.

"I got a call from Capital One Credit Card Company asking if I had applied for a credit card. I hadn't," Meredith said. "They said someone had applied for a credit card in my name. They provided me with the information on the request for credit. The name, Social and phone number were mine, but my mother's maiden name was wrong. It was at that point and time I knew my life was about to change."

Meredith began chasing down the paper trail only to find the person assuming his identity had made 10 requests for credit. Sears granted the imposter a \$5,000 credit limit and it was almost maxed out by the time Meredith knew the account existed. Brazenly, his predator applied for a Cadillac at a local dealership and got a cell phone in Meredith's name.

"I called my cell phone that I didn't own. The individual answered. I said, 'Sorry wrong number.' Then I gave that phone number along with all the other information I had to the local sheriff's department, and it took approximately three years to get all of this off my record," said Meredith.

After many letters and phone calls to different credit card agencies, Sears and the automobile dealership, Meredith was able to regain some control over his financial affairs.

Putting a "block" on his credit ensures that creditors must contact him personally and verify his identity before approving credit in his name.

Meredith never found out who did this to him. He recommended that everyone keep a log notating every call made to every creditor, at what phone number at what time including logging any letters sent and keep copies of everything.

"One of the most important things people can do is keep as much of their private information as possible to themselves and be very discriminating as to how much information is given out whether it is on the phone or via email," said 1st Lt. Scott Baber, 221st Base Support Battalion deputy provost marshal. "When you do give it out make sure you are giving it to an authorized source. Check to see if that company will sell information to other companies, because the more information is circulated, the more likely are the chances of you becoming a victim of identity theft."

Baber said investing in a shredder to destroy all personal documents such as cancelled checks and bank statements is recommended.

When prevention fails and you suspect you may be a victim of identity theft report it to the Military Police immediately and file the most thorough police report as possible, Baber said.

There are several ways to protect against identity theft. Most insurance companies now offer insurance against it for as low as \$3 a month, according to USAA online. To find more about credit reporting visit <http://www.ftc.gov/os/statutes/fcra.htm>.

Job openings

Child and Youth Services care givers are needed throughout the Wiesbaden and Dexheim communities. Call the Nonappropriated Fund Human Resource Office at mil 337-5272 or civ (0611) 705-5272 for more information.

Rheinblick Golf Course is now hiring for outdoor maintenance personnel. Salary starts at \$8.51 per hour. For more information and to apply call mil 336-2816 or civ (0611) 420675.

The Army Career and Alumni Program is seeking a full-time ACAP counselor in Wiesbaden. Applicants must have a MA/MS in counseling, human resource management, training and development or a related field; two years counseling experience and ability to travel. Submit a chronological resume to Hanau ACAP, Pioneer Kaserne, Building 11, Room 325 or email to hanauacap@resourceconsultants.com. For more information call mil 322-8356/8303 or civ (06181) 88-8308.

Food service workers are currently needed at the Wiesbaden Army Airfield, Dexheim and McCully Barracks dining facilities. Wages start at \$10.25 an hour. For more information call mil 337-7004 or civ (0611) 705-7004.

The Treasure Trove Thrift Shop in Hainerberg Housing has an immediate opening for a part-time bookkeeper. Applicant must have computer skills, knowledge of

basic bookkeeping and accounting. Applications can be picked up at the thrift shop or by emailing trove.thrift@gmail.com. Call civ (0611) 742 61 for more information.

Andrews Federal Credit Union is accepting applications for a marketing specialist and a training specialist. For more information, call civ (0611) 978 7535 or email berickson@andrewsfcu.org.

Earn college credit, work from home, get free training and certification by becoming a Family Child Care provider. Providers are needed throughout the Wiesbaden and Dexheim communities. For more information call mil 338-7729 or civ (0611) 380-7729.

The Wiesbaden branch of Bank of America is seeking a part-time customer service representative. Banking experience isn't required, but is a plus. Call mil 337-6008 or civ (0611) 705-6008 for more information.

Andrews Federal Credit Union has career opportunities throughout the Community for Branch and Euro-AFCU Headquarters positions. Log on to their website at www.andrewsfcu.org for more information.

The American Arms Hotel is hiring front desk clerks and custodial workers for housekeeping. Applicants must be U.S. citizens and can apply at the Nonappropriated Fund Personnel Office in Building 1020 at Wiesbaden Army Airfield. For more information call mil 338-7883 or civ (0611) 343 667.

Swingers wanted at Rheinblick Golf Course

By Cassandra Kardeke

221st Base Support Battalion Public Affairs Office

As the days are getting longer and the weather warmer, Rheinblick Golf Course is gearing up and readying the course for this year's golf season.

After a course makeover a few years ago, remodeling of the club house and the addition of a winter garden, maintenance workers have been busy cleaning out the tree line and adding family tees to make the course more playable.

"As soon as the snow melts we want to be ready," said Mark Smith, course manager.

Whether a novice or an avid golfer, Rheinblick caters to everyone's needs starting from the basics.

Offering a golf clinic for beginners, youth and adults, two professional golfers teach the fundamentals of putting, chipping and swinging. Beginning April 16, clinics for youths age 7 to 15, adults and beginners alike will be held every Saturday. One-day clinics for intermediate golfers will be held April 10 and May 15 emphasizing different shots and puts. Clinics must have a minimum of four students and maximum of 10 and must be paid for in advance.

"By adding family tees off the cart path, we've ensured that the entire family can enjoy a game of golf," Smith said. Designed to limit intimidation of the course for beginners and youths, family tees are set up closer

to the green to make the game more enjoyable for everyone. "This way youths or beginners don't interfere with the avid golfer, can still enjoy the game and get the feel of how golf is played."

No matter what the weather looks like outside, staff have prepared and scheduled several scrambles and tournaments for the upcoming season starting with their ever popular Friday Night Scramble beginning April 22 followed by a two-man Blickster tournament April 23. The Rheinblick Open, slated for May 14 and 15, allows beginner and advanced golfers to compete for prizes in several categories. The Open ends with a dinner banquet May 15. The first Commander's Payday Scramble of the season will be held May 31. Golfers must register by 11:30 a.m. the day of the scramble.

Rheinblick Golf Course also offers special unit packages for groups of 30 to 132 players. Units wishing to build morale, have fun and develop camaraderie can sign up for a unit tournament package costing only \$22 per person which includes rental equipment, cart and lunch for all players.

"We definitely offer something for just about everyone," Smith said.

Located approximately 15 minutes from Wiesbaden Army Airfield, Rheinblick is nestled in the hills and woods of the Taunus Mountains in Wiesbaden-Frauenstein. To learn more about the game of golf call mil 336-2816 or civ (0611) 420 675.

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Community news notes

German-American friendship

The Wiesbaden Kontakt Club meets every Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. at the Kleinfeldchen Restaurant on Dotzheimer Strasse. Open to all nationalities, this German-American friendship club hosts several trips, dining outs and adventures throughout Germany to enhance cultural relations as well as help newcomers get to know their new surroundings and more about Germany. Sign up now for “The Night of the Witches” April 30 which includes a historical steam train ride through the Taunus Mountains to Hohenstein. Once in Hohenstein the witches perform a ritual to cast out the “winter demons” and prepare for spring. The trip is suitable for the entire family; however, tickets sell fast. Tickets are €15 adults/€7.50 children and must be purchased by April 7. Call the 221st Base Support Battalion Public Affairs Office for information and tickets at mil 337-5772 or civ(0611)705-5772.

Egg hunt

Dexheim Community Activities and the 123rd Main Support Battalion host egg hunts in the Anderson Barracks community. The Dexheim Child Development Center and Youth Services egg hunt begins at 4 p.m. March 25 on the parade ground behind Building 6309. This event is open to children age 12 and

younger. The Chaplains Office and 123rd Family Readiness Group host a potluck meal following Sunday services March 27 and an egg hunt at 2 p.m. For information call mil 334-5220 or civ(06133)69-220.

Dexheim lab hours

The laboratory at Dexheim Health Clinic is open Monday through Wednesday and Friday from 7:30 a.m. to noon and 1-2 p.m. and 1-4 p.m. Thursdays.

Teen mystery night

Youth ages 10-14 are invited to solve the mystery of “The Pharaoh’s Curse” at 5 p.m. March 25 at the Wiesbaden Army Airfield Library. After a fictitious prom queen is found injured and unconscious, young detectives must decide if it was an accident or attempted murder. Free tickets are available at the Wiesbaden and Dexheim libraries. For more information call mil 337-6706 or civ(0611)705-6706.

Pre-deployment workshops

Army Community Service offers pre-deployment workshops from 6-7 p.m. the first, second and third Monday of the month in Room 22 at Building 7790 in Hainerberg Housing and on the fourth Monday of the month at Dexheim ACS. Unit training is available upon request. Workshops include a deployment guide, financial responsibilities,

emergency information and stress management. For more information call mil 337-5034/5754 or civ(0611)705-5034/5754.

National Prayer Breakfast set

Guest speaker, Dr. Dennis Swanberg, will speak at this year’s National Prayer Breakfast, April 1 at the Ramada Hotel in Wiesbaden. Tickets are available from any unit chaplain or the 221st Base Support Battalion’s Chaplain’s Office. For more information call mil 337-1570 or civ(0611)705-1570.

Spring break for community youths

Team 221st Youth Services offers several trips during Spring Break. Youths in grades six through 12 must be registered with Child and Youth Services Central Enrollment Office and have a permission slip signed by a parent when signing up. Scheduled trips include the Stuttgart Zoo, Centro Mall, I-MAXX 2, the Aqua-Toll Wave Pool, fishing in Limburg and Six Flags in Belgium. For more information call mil 338-7691 or civ(0611)380-7691.

Penny bowl

Bring a penny to the Dexheim Bowling Center April 1 and pay only 50 cents to bowl from 5-9 p.m. including free shoe rental.

Outdoor Rec tours

Ski season is still here. Sign up for one of the many ski trips Wiesbaden and Dexheim Outdoor Recreation Centers offer: skiing on the **Feldberg** March 19 or a two-day trip March 19-20; **helicopter skiing in Switzerland** March 18-20; skiing in **Engelberg, Switzerland** March 26. Other tours include swimming trips to the **Frankfurt wave pool** March 17, 24 and 31; **fishing in Limburg** March 19 and 27; **bouldering in Nieder Olm** March 22 and 29.

Parenting help for newbies

The New Parent Education and Support Program offer a three-part series of workshops for new or soon-to-be parents. The series topics include: **childbirth experience** — dealing with discomfort in labor; **breastfeeding** — getting started and being successful and **postpartum/newborn care and safety**. Registration is required for these workshops. Call mil 338-7835 or civ(0611)532-9842 for more information.

Dry cleaning at Mainz-Kastel

Dry cleaning and laundry services for military and civilian clothing is now available in Building 4502 at Mainz Kastel Storage Station (former Barber Shop location). The shop is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Vendors needed

The 221st Base Support Battalion Community Recreation Division is seeking private organizations, Family Readiness Groups and other vendors for this year’s July Fourth celebration to be held at Dexheim Anderson Barracks from 4-11 p.m. Volunteers are also needed to decorate, run activities, dress up as costumed characters and lots more. For more information or to volunteer call mil 337-6111 or civ(0611)705-6111.

Studio closed

The Official Photo Office at the Training Support Center at Wiesbaden Army Airfield will be closed March 28 through April 5. People needing photo support must make arrangements before the closing date.

Instructors needed

Child and Youth Services seek instructors to teach martial arts, dance, music and drama as a part of

the new Schools of Knowledge Inspiration Exploration and Skill program. For more information call mil 338-7592 or civ(0611)380-7592.

Job fair

Army Community Service hosts a Job Fair March 18 from 9 a.m. to noon at the ACS Cafeteria in Building 7790 in Hainerberg Housing. For more information call mil 337-5754 or civ(0611)705-5754.

Flea market

The Community Activity Center hosts an indoor flea market March 19. Sellers can rent tables for \$10 on a first-come, first-served basis. Doors open at 8 a.m. For more information call mil 337-5750 or civ(0611)705-5750.

USO in Dexheim

A United Services Organization representative is now available for Dexheim Soldiers and residents. Services are offered in Building 6317 on Anderson Barracks every Thursday from 2-5 p.m.

Game night

Due to popular demand, the Community Activity Center has changed game night to every Wednesday at 5 p.m. If you enjoy playing games such as Dungeons and Dragons, Monopoly, Yahtzee, Taboo, Pictionary, Battleship, Scrabble, Risk and others, then head to the CAC at Wiesbaden Army Airfield. Food and beverages are available for purchase at the Victory Point bar. For more information call mil 337-5750 or civ(0611)705-5750.

AA meetings

Alcoholics Anonymous meetings are held at the Wiesbaden Army Airfield Community Counseling Center at Building 1526 every Wednesday at 7 p.m. For information on other AA meetings call the Army Substance Abuse Program coordinator at mil 337-1710 or civ(0611)705-1710.

Balloon Shop open

An all occasion Balloon Shop is now open at the Community Activity Center with over 200 mylar and latex balloons to choose from. To order a balloon bouquet stop by the shop or call mil 337-5750 or civ(0611)705-5750.

EFMP support

Join the Exceptional Family Program support group the first Wednesday of each month from noon to 1 p.m. in Room 22 at Army Community Service, Building 7790 in Hainerberg Housing. For more information call mil 337-5034 or civ(0611)705-5034.

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Bank closes

The Baumholder community bank will be closed March 25-28. Normal operating hours resume March 29.

Be a dental tech

The Baumholder American Red Cross and dental clinic hold a dental program orientation March 23 on the third floor of Building 8125 beginning at 9 a.m.

This training is free to military family members and space is limited. In the States this program would cost approximately \$7,000 to \$10,000 dollars. For more information contact Terry Hitchcock, station manager, or Gina Marie Rivera, program associate, at mil 485-1760/6313 or civ (06783) 6-1760/6313.

Register now

Baumholder American Middle/High School holds preregistration for the 2005/2006 school year April 11-22 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the main office. Items to bring include current orders and immunization records. Call Renee Thomas at mil 485-7590 for more information.

If you're not sure if you will be departing before school starts, you should still register.

Staffing for next year will be based on preregistration numbers.

Vet Clinic open

The Baumholder Veterinary Clinic is now providing more services than ever. Appointments are now available and they are also providing surgical and dental services. The clinic is open Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and Tuesdays for surgeries. For more information contact the Vet Clinic at mil 485-6636.

Contest winners

Winners of the Smith Elementary School Black History Month essay competition are Ariane McKiernan, fifth grade, and Shayla Wright, sixth grade. Lisa Bishop's sixth-grade class won the most participants prize which was a pizza party for the students and an education cup for Bishop.

Iron Stork

An Operation Iron Stork baby shower is scheduled from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. April 25 at the Rheinlander Convention Center. The event is open to the public.

ACS

mil 485-8188, civ (06783) 6-8188

AFB classes

The following Army Family Team Building sessions are scheduled for March and April:

- March 24, April 22, 23, Level I, 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- March 21-23, Level II, 8:30

Happenings



Photo by LeAnne MacAllister

In search of bargains at the bazaar

More than \$115,000 worth of merchandise was sold at the annual Baumholder Community Spouses Club bazaar, which produced over \$15,000 in raised funds for community projects. The spring bazaar was held at the Hall of Champions Feb. 25-27. More than 40 vendors came from across Europe, making the shopper's paradise one of the most successful bazaars in recent years. Organizers of this year's bazaar report that profits exceeded those raised last year.

a.m. to 1 p.m.

- April 26, 27, Level III, 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

FRG training

A two-day class geared toward new and soon-to-be Family Readiness Group leaders is April 18-19 from 8:30 a.m. to noon.

Parenting

The Parents and Tots Playgroup (birth to preschool), meets 10-11:30 a.m. Mondays and Fridays at the Iron Kids Play Room, Building 8222.

Nurturing program sessions for parents and their infants, toddlers and preschoolers meet from 10 a.m. to noon. Mondays at the Iron Kids indoor play ground, Building 8222.

A coffee break support group for military spouses and couples meets 10-11:30 a.m. Wednesdays.

Other programs include:

- April 5, 19, Breastfeeding Class, 10 a.m. to noon
- April 12, 26, Labor and Delivery, 4-6 p.m.
- April 13, 27, Newborn Care Class. This class offers education and support for parents on care of infants during the first 28 days of life.

Relationships

The following classes are offered for couples by ACS:

- Thursdays, Maintaining Love in a Healthy Relationship, 5:30-7:30

p.m.

- Wednesdays, Happily Ever After — Adjusting to New Marriage, 5:30-7:30 p.m.

● Wednesdays, Spouses Coffee Break, 10-11:30 a.m. This is a support group for military spouses and couples.

- Fridays, Anger Free Living, 9-11 a.m.

Be job ready

Get assistance in joining the workforce with the following classes offered by ACS:

- March 22, 29, April 5, 19, 10 Steps to a Federal Job, 10 a.m. to noon. Learn to navigate through the federal job system.

● March 15, PCS Pre-Employment Class, 10 a.m. to noon. This class will teach you how to start seeking employment before you PCS to your next duty station.

- March 25, April 29, Interviewing Skills and Dressing for Success, 10 a.m. to noon.

● April 12, 26, Career Exploration, 10 a.m. to noon. Take the first steps towards finding a rewarding career.

- April 22, Resume Writing, 10 a.m. to noon.

Financial control

Get a grip on your finances with the following classes:

- March 15, Successful Money Management, 2-4 p.m.

- March 30, Basics of Investing, 9-11 a.m.

- April 6, Checkbook Management, 10-11 a.m.

● April 13, Living and Saving on a Shoestring, 9-11 a.m. This course offers tips on effective grocery shopping, money management and family savings.

- April 5, Successful Money Management, 2-4 p.m. Identify, solve and avoid the major causes of financial problems, effective spending plan, manage credit.

Newcomers

Families Learning About Germany, or FLAG, offers its next orientation from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. March 21-23.

Family coaches

Visiting professional counselors are available to provide support and guidance if you are dealing with conflict, worry or difficulty in or outside of your home. Counselors are available to meet with you when and where you are most comfortable. Contact Army Community Service to schedule a meeting at mil 485-6604/8188.

Child, Youth Services

mil 485-7003, civ (06783) 6-7003

Child care

Child care for special events is

available at \$2.50 an hour per child; \$2.75 an hour per child after 5 p.m. and on weekends. This service is subject to the availability of staff. Call mil 485-7393 for more information.

Youth sports

mil 485-7003, civ (06783) 6-7003

Registration

Baseball and softball registration is ongoing through March 18. Current health assessments are required and volunteer coaches are needed. Girls softball is available for ages 11-18 and boys and girls baseball is offered for ages 5-18. Registration is \$30 for the first child and \$27 for each additional child. One head coach and one assistant coach per team get first child for free and the second child for half price.

Youth Services

mil 485-7276, civ (06783) 6-7276

Activities

Youth Services is open Mondays through Fridays from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Numerous activities are offered during March and April

There's free midnight sports March 18 at the Mountaineer Fitness Center from 8 p.m. to midnight.

A middle school dance is scheduled March 18 at the Underground for sixth-through eighth-grade students, 8-11 p.m., \$5, finger foods and drinks provided.

A spring break ropes course is offered and camping in Bitburg is offered April 13-14 for sixth-through 12th-grade students. The \$75 cost includes transportation, ropes course, caving and rappelling, camping at a German campground and all meals.

The Vogelweh Base Exchange and teen center is the trip destination April 15 for ninth-through 12th-grade students from 5-11 p.m. The trip is free.

Celebrate spring break April 16 with a cookout at the Teen Cafe for ninth-through 12th-grade students from 5-9 p.m. This is a free event.

A Month of the Military Child celebration featuring a barbecue, pool and foosball tournament, 3 on 3 basketball at the Underground for sixth-through eighth-grade students is scheduled for April 30 from 2-6 p.m. The event is free.

Outdoor Recreation

mil 485-7182, civ (06783) 6-7182

Trips n' stuff

Outdoor Recreation is open Mondays through Fridays from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and noon to 5 p.m. on holidays. The following activities are offered in March:

- March 17-20, Austriaski week-

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end to Gastein, \$315 per seat. Two-day overnight includes breakfast and dinner and a two-day ski pass

● March 26, Black Forest ski trip to Feldberg, \$65 per seat. The cost includes ski or snowboard rental and transportation. Child rates are available.

● April 16, 30, Keukenhof Tulip Garden trip to Holland, \$85 per seat. Child rates are available.

Athletic club

mil 485-6156, civ (06783) 6-6156

Aerobics schedule

Tuesdays, Thursdays, toning, 7 p.m.

Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, step aerobics, 7 p.m.

Tuesdays, Thursdays, step/toning aerobics, 9:15 a.m.

Tuesdays, Thursdays, water aerobics, 9:15 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Fridays, \$1 family swimming, 5-8 p.m.

Wear green on March 17 and work out for half price.

Golf course

mil 485-6156, civ (06783) 6-6156

A Luck-O-Irish sale is offered March 17. Purchase any product on March 17 and pull out a secret ballot for additional savings. The 10-25 percent sale is for retail merchandise only. Other prizes include individual golf passes and more.

Happenings continued

Spring golf clinic

A spring golf clinic is offered every Saturday in April from 10 a.m. to noon. The cost is \$40 per session or \$160 for all five sessions. The clinic is geared for those who want to learn to play golf or those golfers that want to get back into golfing form.

Spring open

A spring open tournament is scheduled for April 24 with a shotgun start at 9 a.m. The cost is \$25 per person. Nonmembers pay green fees. The format is a four person scramble. Signup deadline is April 20.

Library

mil 485-1740, civ (06783)-6-1740

Story hour

A preschool story hour is offered Thursdays from 10:30-11:15 a.m.

Library collection

Baumholder's library collection includes 26,000 books, audio/video products, CD-ROM reference and online services, 155 magazines and newspapers. Special services include reference section, children's

section, automated U.S. Army Europe library system, CD-ROM computers, internet, word processing services, printers, online catalog computers, coin-operated copiers and typewriters. Over 75 new DVD titles were recently added to the collection and there's more to come.

Keepsake Framing, Photo Shop

mil 485-8793, civ (06783) 6-8793

New hours

The new hours for the Keepsake Framing and Photo Shop are Tuesdays through Fridays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and Saturdays from 1-6 p.m.

Framing class

A framing class is offered March 26. The cost is \$25.

Photo studio open

A senior portrait special is offered through March 26. Get one 11x14, two 8x10s, four 5x7s and 36 wallet-sized photos for \$250. The cost also includes sitting fee, proofs and three outfit changes.

Sports, fitness

mil 485-7176 civ (06783) 6-7176

Sports shorts

A racquetball invitational is scheduled for March 19-20 at the Mountaineer Fitness Center 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Community level softball tryouts will be held March 28 at Iron Soldiers Fields I and II from 6-8 p.m.

A spring break Five-Kilometer Run is slated for 10 a.m. April 9 at the Hall of Champions. Cost is \$12 and registration is from 8-9:30 a.m. Awards go to the top two finishers in each age category.

The deadline for intramural softball registration is April 14.

An intramural softball coaches and officials clinic is scheduled April 18-23. Register no later than April 8. A preseason softball tournament is still to be determined.

Rheinlander Club

mil 485-7507, civ (06783) 6-7507

Easter brunch

An Easter Sunday brunch is offered March 27. Two seatings are available, 10-11:30 a.m. and noon to 1:30 p.m. The cost is \$12.50 for adults, \$9.50 for ages 10-15, \$6.50 for ages 6-9, 5 and under are free and reservations are required.

April breakfast

The club offers breakfast April 10 from 10-11:30 a.m. and noon to 1:30 p.m. Cost for adults is \$7.50, children 10-15 pay \$5.50, children 6-9 pay \$3.50 and children 5 and under eat free. Reservations are required.

Shooters

mil 485-6345, civ (06783) 6-6345

Food, drink

Shooters has dining Sundays through Thursdays from 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Breakfast is served Saturdays and Sundays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and dinner is 4-9 p.m. Home delivery is available.

The bar is open Sundays through Thursdays from 4-11 p.m., and Fridays and Saturdays from 4 p.m. to 2 a.m.

Shooters offers an Easter egg hunt March 26 at 1 p.m. There will be free hot dogs for the kids and an adult buffet for \$5 which includes brats and chicken tenders.

Wednesdays is all you can eat spaghetti night from 6-9 p.m. The cost is \$6 for adults.

Shooters also has TGIF get-togethers every Friday from 3-7 p.m.

A country spring fling with Country DJ is scheduled April 1 from 8 p.m. to 2 a.m.

Cowboy night is featured April 15 from 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. Customers wearing cowboy boots receive a free gift.



Photo by LeAnne MacAllister

Welcome to Baumholder

Stephanie Jones introduces Command Sgt. Maj. Ann McDaniels of the 222nd Base Support Battalion to new command sergeants major spouses Sue Orosz and Regina Eyer at a welcome gathering held at the Rheinlander Convention Center March 1.

Legal experts explain debt collection process

Courtesy of the Legal Assistance Office

Most people in the Baumholder community are debtors. After all anyone who uses credit cards, has a loan or a home mortgage is a debtor. Yet very few people know about the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act, and even fewer understand it.

In understanding your rights in regards to collection agencies, it is important to first know a little about the debt collection process. Debt collection generally involves a consumer credit account. When an account is not paid in a timely manner, the holder of the account called the creditor, usually contacts the consumer by mail.

Collection agencies come in to the picture when the original creditor's efforts to get paid have failed. Collection agencies are comparable to "bounty hunters." They generally get the accounts from the creditors in two ways. First, they may buy the account outright. For example, you owe Dr. Bob \$100. The collection agency "buys" the account from Dr. Bob for 50 cents on the dollar, to be precise \$50. The collection agency then tries to collect the full \$100 from the consumer. The second way collection agencies obtain accounts is through a contingency fee arrangement. To use our earlier example, the collection agency agrees with Dr. Bob to collect the money for a 33 percent fee. In other words, for every dollar they collect for Dr. Bob, they get a third of that money.

Collection agencies have a variety of ways to collect an account, but usually they follow a predictable pattern. In this pattern, there are two general stages. They are the pre-lawsuit and post-lawsuit stages. In the pre-lawsuit stage, the debt collector contacts the consumer through the telephone and/or mail. The consumer is essentially advised that unless he pays promptly, certain action may be taken against him. At this stage the collection agent often has wide discretion to "cut a deal." His goal is to accurately gauge the consumer and determine how much money he can get out of the consumer in the shortest amount of time. The collection agent initially tries for the "grand slam," that is to say all the money at once. If this doesn't work the collection agent can bargain and use such arrangements as lump sum percentage payments, namely, "pay 75 percent of the debt and we'll drop it." As a last resort, the collection agent may agree to

installment payments.

If the collection agent cannot arrange some type of resolution, then the collection agency must make a decision — essentially, "fish or cut bait." If a small amount of money is involved (usually less than \$500), the collection agency will rarely sue, the reason being that the law suit would be more expensive than the amount that would be gained. Often the collection agency will report the account as a bad debt to a credit bureau and cease collection activity. If the collection agency, however, decides to sue, the matter will begin with a complaint filed in the court of the consumer's jurisdiction. A trial will be set, and a court will rule as to the validity of the debt. If the court rules the account is owed by the consumer, the judgment of the court is usually recorded in the local probate court and the post-trial phase of collection begins.

At this stage, the collection agency is given much more power than it had prior to a judgment being given by a court. The collection agency may now compel the consumer to do such things as appear at depositions and answer written questions. The collection agency may have writs of execution issued against the consumer's property or file garnishments against bank accounts and wages.

In 1982 the U.S. Congress passed the Fair Debt Collection Practices Act. 15 U.S.C. Section 1692. This act was passed in response to the explosive growth of debt collection agencies and the frequent cases of their abusive tactics. The act puts limits on what collection agencies can do. It outlines certain rights of consumers and it outlines penalties that may be used to punish rogue collection agencies.

Some of the limits imposed by the F.D.C.P.A. concern times in which collection agents may contact consumers. Collection agencies may not contact a consumer before 8 a.m. or after 9 p.m.

The act also restricts the manner in which debt collectors may contact you.

Primarily the debt collector has to inform you immediately that he is a debt collector and that the information you give may be used to collect a debt. Also the act requires that the debt collector's communication be reasonable.

The debt collector may not verbally abuse you, nor may he threaten any action that is illegal. An example of an illegal action contemplated by the act, is threatening to sue when there is no legal basis for the suit, for example the statute of limitations having expired.

Finally the act controls who the debt collector may contact. Third parties such as a Soldier's company commander or even one's spouse may only be contacted for strictly limited purposes such as the location of the consumer. Further, the debt collector must refrain from giving any information in reference to the alleged debt.

The act gives the consumer certain affirmative rights against collection agencies. The primary right is to instruct the debt collector not to contact the consumer further. If the instruction is given in writing, the collection agency is barred from that point forward from contacting the consumer for any reason except to inform the consumer of their intent to invoke a specific legal remedy, specifically, to sue.

The act also lays out remedies that may be used against violating collection agencies. Most importantly, the act gives the consumer a private right of action to sue for a violation of the act. In federal court a consumer may be entitled to an award of \$1,000 for each violation of the act.

Additionally victimized consumers may sue for "actual damages" such as mental anguish, humiliation and stress caused by the collection agency. Further the act, if successfully sued upon, allows the consumer to be reimbursed for all court costs and attorney fees. Thus violations of the act may turn the "hunter into the hunted."

The Fair Debt Collection Practices Act was not designed to prevent valid debts from being collected. This was a major reason why Congress did not apply the act to the original creditors. Instead, the act was designed to pull in the reins of rogue collection agencies which were often harassing consumers.

The act ensures that collection agencies treat consumers with dignity and respect or face the consequences of abusive conduct. Determining what constitutes a violation of the act is often very difficult. Therefore consumers contacted by a collection agency should apply the "smell test." Consumers must ask themselves "Can this collection agency treat me like this? Is their conduct reasonable?" If the answer is no, the consumer should contact their nearest legal office for advice.



Team takes first place

Baumholder swimmers compete at Munich championships

By LeAnne MacAllister
222nd Base Support Battalion Public Affairs Office

Three Baumholder swimmers, members of the Kaiserslautern King Fish swim team, competed in the European Forces Swim League championship meet Feb. 19-20. The championship qualifiers swam in three or four events at the Munich Olympic pool. The King Fish took first place out of 18 teams.

"This is the fourth time in a row we've

brought home first place," said Sara Adams, assistant coach. "We're very proud of all the swimmers' accomplishments; they persevered through a long, strenuous season to achieve this."

Baumholder swimmer Ashley Fuchs brought home one second place and two fourth place medals for the team in the 100 meter girls' freestyle race. Sarah Money and Rachel Money each placed in multiple individual events.

Baumholder community members Kara Krill and Katie Money also swim for the King Fish team. In addition, Adams and 1st. Lt. Dan Downs of the 40th Engineer Battalion are local coaches who volunteer their time with the Kaiserslautern-based group.

The King Fish have 85 swimmers who practiced at Baumholder's pool throughout the August to February season. According to coaches, all swimmers performed extremely well this season, and three members of the Baumholder group met the qualifying time requirements to swim at the EFSL championship.

"Swimming is a mentally demanding sport. The coaching team is extremely pleased with the season's outcome. All of our athletes have greatly improved in their endurance as well as stroke techniques," said Adams.

When asked about next year's goals, Adams was enthusiastic. "They are all wonderful kids in and out of the water. In fact, I miss working and being with them during off-season. I'm already looking forward to next year to see them improve and grow as swimmers and as individuals."



Ashley Fuchs displays her second and fourth place medals.

Education Center notes

Baumholder's Adult Education Program offers Conversational German I, Conversational German II and Conversational Italian. Register now for classes beginning March 28. Cost is \$40 per class. Call mil 485-8891.

Registration for Term 4 classes with the University of Maryland and Central Texas College which start March 28 is under way.

A University of Oklahoma representa-

tive visits Baumholder the first Wednesday of each month from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Call mil 480-6807. The university offers a masters of Human Relations and Arts in International Relations Degrees. A PhD in organizational leadership is also offered.

A University of Phoenix representative visits Baumholder the first Thursday of each month from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Dr. Seuss sparks reading appreciation

By LeAnne MacAllister
222nd Base Support Battalion
Public Affairs Office

Nearly 20 toddlers and pre-school-age children gathered at Baumholder's library to celebrate the 101st birthday of Dr. Seuss. The gathering, held March 3, was incorporated with the weekly story hour program held on Thursdays at 10:30 a.m. Amidst the festivities, the children and parents created awareness of the National Education Association's campaign to illustrate the importance of reading.

Angie Brockman, a reading specialist by trade and story hour volunteer, organized the event. After reading two Dr. Seuss stories to the children, Brockman led the room in singing Happy Birthday in honor of the author's birthday. The interactive program continued with volunteers and moms helping their children make their own Dr. Seuss hat out of red and white construction paper.

And of course, no birthday party would be complete without dessert. The group, donning their new hats, sang again and ended story time by enjoying a slice of cake.

Wearing a hat in honor of Dr. Seuss' birthday illustrates the importance of reading while honoring the famous author whose books continue to teach kids the fun of reading, according to the National Education Association.

This year marks the seventh an-



A toddler dons his new cat hat.

nual NEA sponsored Read Across America program. The goal of the program is to focus the country's attention on how important it is to read to children and help them master basic skills. The official celebration is March 2, the birthday of Theodor Geisel, better known as Dr. Seuss.

"I feel really strongly about this. The sooner we get kids read to and reading, the better. It improves their readiness skills and increases their ability to understand the structure of reading. It is also a way to curb reading problems early on," said Brockman. Brockman, Gloria Ruhnke and Colleen Nutter volunteer for story hour at the Baumholder Library.

In addition to nearly 3 million American school participants, approximately 40 national organizations and associations give their



Photos by LeAnne MacAllister

Angie Brockman, a reading specialist, reads from a Dr. Seuss book to a group of toddlers who gathered at the library. The event marked the 101st birthday of the famous author of books for children.

support to celebrate reading. The program grows annually, and can now be found from libraries to community centers, churches, hospitals and bookstores.

"Many U.S. Army Europe libraries have this program. Baumholder has had it in the past and I wanted to bring it back. I am very pleased with the turnout," said Bruce

Belknap, Baumholder librarian.

In addition to the preschool story hour, the library will begin its summer reading program this June for students in kindergarten through eighth grade. This year's theme is Dragons, Dreams and Daring Deeds. Participants' reading will be tracked, events will be coordinated with the program and certi-

icates will be presented at its completion.

The library is constantly in need of volunteers to help with reading programs. People interested in volunteering can stop by the library. Story hour is open to all members of the Baumholder community, whether small, tall or red-and-white, hat-wearing individuals.

Dive into aquatics early, avoid last minute rush

There might be snow on the ground and the temperatures have been hovering in the minus scale but the Baumholder American Red Cross and Morale, Welfare and Recreation are already gearing up for the 20th annual Aquatics Academy May 8-20 at the Baumholder pool.

Interest in this event is always high so although we are in the early days of spring, people interested in participating should make plans now and avoid the summer rush.

The training offered is open to those entering the aquatics field at the basic level, or those who wish to instruct others.

The academy offers more than an opportunity to become fully versed in the aquatics field.

There are job opportunities in aquatics, working at pools and lakes in the United States and bases around Europe.

"We have 16 to 20 patrons trained as lifeguards in Baumholder

each year that go to the United States to work at various summer camps.

"Many find lifeguard jobs pretty easy because camps and seasonal pools are always in need of a certified lifeguard," said Warren Latham, fitness and aquatics coordinator.

"Baumholder pool is always in need of lifeguards and water safety instructors to properly staff our facility and teach the wide range of programs," he said.

The Baumholder pool offers numerous aquatics classes and training year-round such as water survival training, combat water survival test, water safety for youth staff, water aerobics, profile PT, water PT, adult and youth swim lessons.

"Baumholder pool is favored by lap swimmers because we reserve one or two lanes in the pool for lap swimming everyday," said Latham. The pool can also be rented for pool parties and special events.

'Adapt' your U.S. appliances to 220

Courtesy of the Baumholder
Claims Office

The standard household electrical outlet in most of Europe, including Germany, is 220-240 volts, twice the standard household voltage in North America. A normal 110-volt electrical appliance designed for use in the United States will provide a nice fireworks display, complete with sparks and smoke, if plugged into a German outlet.

If you must use U.S. appliances or devices, be aware of the problems involved as well as the pros and cons of various solutions. Unfortunately claims submitted for electrical items damaged due to power surges or improper voltages are not usually payable by the government.

It is easy to buy plug adapters that convert North American-style flat-pronged plugs to fit European round "Schuko" outlets; however, this only solves half

the problem. It doesn't help with the voltage disparity. In most cases you will need to buy a voltage transformer or converter.

Some items are best left in storage until your return to the United States rather than being converted. Clocks, microwaves or anything else that depends on the alternating current cycle cannot be easily converted. AC in Europe is 50 cycles per second (50 hertz, Hz), whereas the AC in the United States and Canada is 60 Hz. Your U.S. electric clock will run too slow in Europe because of the 10-hertz difference.

There are two kinds of voltage converters. One is for low wattage devices such as electric razors or radios that use less than about 50 watts. Bigger items such as TV sets, irons and refrigerators require a more heavy-duty voltage converter. These transformers weigh a lot and are expensive.

Frequency and voltage surges are prevalent in many countries.

Some additional power protection devices may be necessary, including surge protectors, heavy duty grounded transformers, voltage stabilizers and uninterruptible power supplies. In Germany the voltage is 220, but may fluctuate.

The 110-volt outlets in government housing may fluctuate up to 130 volts because they operate off a fixed transformer that simply reduces the German current by 110 volts and does not take power surges or current fluctuations into account. Power surges are everyday occurrences.

The bottom line is that all of them may destroy your equipment sooner or later. Surge protection devices are not 100 percent effective but provide a valuable additional safeguard for all types of electric and electronic equipment from the destructive high-voltage fluctuations that are associated with lightning and other power surges.